

HELENA OPEN LANDS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

MARCH 12, 2013

Room 326

City-County Building

Mary Arnold called the March 12, 2013, meeting to order. A quorum was present: Dan Wirak, Lois Olsen, Clint Morrison, Jane Kollmeyer, Corey Baker, Brad Langsather, Dawn North.

MINUTES

The February minutes were accepted with modification. Brad, I could not understand what he was changing. First paragraph 2013 work plan. I don't understand this.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

There was discussion about the 2013 work plan and about the trails agreement. Brad reviewed the plan starting with the forestry section and tree removal. He noted some property acquisitions and the finalizing of some purchases on Mount Ascension. The plan will continue weed management with spraying and biological releases of insects. There will be trail construction including the Saddle Drive trail that will be ADA compliant and a connector trail from Mount Ascension to intersect the Eddie McClure trail. There will be closures of some of the social trails that HOLMAC identified and completion of projects from last year. The Prickly Pear Land Trust will be working with HOLMAC on a comprehensive sign inventory and a trailhead amenity inventory replacing stolen and damaged signs. PPLT will also do a trail condition analysis. More trash cans will be installed at the old shooting range and off Meatloaf. He is working on a grant application for a permanent restroom at Mount Helena and is constructing fences to delineate boundaries to stop off-road travel.

In response to a question from Jim Phillips about the adopt-a-trail project, Brad said it will be included in PPLT's scope of service under Corey Baker, PPLT's new trails coordinator. Gus Byrom requested the easements at Nob Hill be retained and protected. He asked that trail access be acquired at the north end of Nob Hill.

Neil Harrington asked if monitoring is done on weed control areas; Brad responded that it is. Neil also asked about some tree

HOLMAC/2

March 12, 2013

maintenance on Prickly Pear trail on Mount Ascension. Brad responded that trimming is part of the fuel treatment program and is a way to keep fire from going into tree crowns and spreading.

Ramona Stuehm commented that although the fuel management has taken away shade, it has opened up some great views. Brad responded the work that has been done and the beetles took away a mature forest, and the goal is to open up the forest from too many saplings and once again have a healthy mature forest in 20 or 30 years.

Dawn North asked about the ground cover recovery under the chips; Brad said the chips are holding the moisture in. Weeds are more visible but are easier to access for control. FEMA-funded projects do not allow burning, so chips are the only option. 560 of 1000 acres have been treated. Weathering has reduced the visual impact of the chips. Ramona asked about social trails. Corey talked about the trails that made sense and ended up on the map, but there are still many that need to be closed or relocated. The trail system needs to be sustainable. There will be a public information session in addition to an article about the social trails later on.

Dennis McCahon commented about reestablishing a specific portion of the Dumpout Trail that the deer actually established.

There was discussion about not rewarding bad behavior by people who build trails illegally even if people like the trail. Brad responded that by moving a gate to the county road, it will help prevent some of the trash dumping and partying that goes on at Davis Gulch; that project will be added to the work plan.

The BLM has to approve the parking plan and lot at the Beattie Street parcel and moving it will get the parking off the right of way.

Brad read Tom Kilmer's comments about the dogs taking over and not being cleaned up after and needing to be leashed. He suggested no dogs with bikers and animal control walking the trails doing a meet and greet. He also suggested having a day two of dog-free trails. He said if the weeds are not controlled, bring back the goats. Mountain biking on wet trails is still a problem with skidding around corners and switchbacks. He suggested a pamphlet on biking properly. There are redundant trails on Mount Ascension. The tree thinning looks good, and he appreciates the work that has been done.

Corey noted he will be having a bike summit with several biking groups to discuss some of the issues mentioned.

HOLMAC/3

March 12, 2013

No one spoke against adoption of the 2013 work plan. **Lois moved and Jane seconded a motion to adopt the plan with the addition of the fence construction and gate at Arrowroot and not taking out the social trail.** Brad discussed his PPLT help and seasonal workers and volunteers to do work. Public works did the Mount Helena parking lot and will do one at the Donaldson barn. A Girl Scout helped author a grant and will help organize a group to build a fence at the golf course. He also mentioned having a national team and MCC to do work. It was suggested to have a card to give to trail users to make comments about things they see as problems. There was discussion of the website and Facebook. **The work plan as amended was approved.** Brad was commended for his work.

REPORTS

Cultural Resources - KTVH did a piece on Mount Helena history on 'Montana Minute'.

Trails

Wildlife

Forestry

Mary recommended sending a letter to the city commission about encroachments on city open lands. It was suggested language be added to the subdivision regulations that addresses setbacks from city open lands. Language is also needed to clarify enforcement of trespasses on city lands and perhaps be part of the building permit process. HOLMAC should ask for a comprehensive policy on trespass. Mary will work to edit the letter.

Jane discussed the consultant meeting for a park maintenance district with stakeholders including East Helena, Jefferson, and Lewis & Clark counties.

Next meeting date: April 9, 2013.

Agenda Items:

Carol Kirkland

Recorder

